A MILL BALLAD From the French of Gustave Nadaud by E. H. Hickey. In the heart of a country wild, Where the unbelievers be,
Was a king so good and wiseLong, long ago lived he:
He was kind as a father is,
And rich as the earth, ywis.

Turn the mill, turn the mill, Jack; Not yet have I filled my sack.

But his subjects they rebelled Against his majesty. And drove him from the throne, Nobedy kneweth why; From town to town he past; A mill was his shelter at last.

Turn the mill, turn the mill, Jack; Not yet have I filled my sack.

Ner glory nor fear had he.
This Fing as he worked alway;
No mornue fived on his lips;
This miller he sang all day;
And all alght he situalered deep;
Of yore could he never sleep.

Turn the mill, turn the mill, Jack; Not yet have I filled my sack.

Dut once on a day there came.

Of those who hed driven him away,
A host of folk to his côte.

For chang able souls are they:

Take back the crown for thire head in

Nay! I give it to you, instead in

Turn the mill, tern the mill, Jack; Not yet have I filled my sack.

"My wife is a miller's wife. And willers my sons shall be:
The water runs in the stream:
The corn in the deld grows free:
All else doth change," he said:
"But aye is there need of brend!"

#### PIETRO GHISLERI.

BY F. MARION CRAWFORD. Author of "Saracinesca," "The Three Fates," etc. Copyright, 1892, by Macmillan & Co.

CHAPTER VII.

Arden's health improved, at first very rapidly and then more slowly, as he seemed to approach what, for him, was a normal condition of strength. The month of December was fine, and he was able to drive out constantly, to be up most of the day, and to talk with acquaintances without any great fatigue. As a natural consequence Laura regained in a very short time all that she had lost, and her eyes no longer looked sunken and haggard ner her face unnaturally

Her gratitude to Ghisleri was boundless, and as the days went on and Arden had no relapse she began to wonder how she could ever have felt anything approaching to dislike for the man to whom she almost owed her husband's life. Pietre, on his part, came often to the house and saw the change that had taken place in her sake, for he had long admired her, and felt that she was very like a certain ideal of woman of which he never talked. But his pleasure was not very genuine, after all. He hardly believed hitherto had little experience of lasting moods in Herbert was very much in love with Don Fran women. For the present, at least, she believed in him and was grateful.

About this time Donna Adele, her husband, and his father and mother, all came back from as he scrutinized his companion's face. He know the country, and at or near the same period the great majority of the old society stagers appeared again as fererunners of the coming season. The gay set was not yet all assembled, and it was even reported that some of them would not some at all, for there was financial trouble in the air. and many people had lost money, or found their incomes diminished by the general depression. Nevertheless, when Christmas came, few of the familiar faces of the previous year were missing and those few have not been seen in this history.

"This is the beginning," said Gouache to Ghisleri. "You may remember that chaiming description of chaos in the sacred writings 'in the beginning darkness was over all the earth'-very like Rome before the season begins. The resemblance emis there, my dear friend. The sentence which follows would hardly be applicable. civing sin a last chance? Have you another diabolical production ready?

"Be-"I am afraid not," answered Ghisleri. sides, one should never repeat a good thing."

"That is what my wife says," observed Anastase, thoughtfully, "That dear woman! But for her, I should do nothing but repeat my succossful pictures-if possible by a chemical process. galleries of old masters are formed. There is a out the article at a fixed price, including the cost of the green wood for smeking the Rem brandts, and the genuine old panels for doing the Botticellis. I often go to see him. He knows more about grinding colors, and about vehicles and varnishes, and the price of lamp-black, than any artist I ever knew. He painted that portrait of Raphael by himself-by Raphael, I mean, for Prince Durakoff last year, and found the docu ments to prove its existence among his papers. It took him six months, but it was well done, especially the parchments. There was even the receipt for the money paid to Raphael for the picture by the Most Excellent House of Fragipani, signed by the painter himself-I mean by Raphael. Cheap at ten thousand francs. Durakoff paid the dealer eighty thousand without bargaining. He did not reflect that if it had been genuine it would have been worth five hundred thousand, and, if not, that it was not worth fifty centimes."

"Rather like a friend," observed Ghisleri,

Gouache, "as love is a question of climate." "You are not usually so cynical. What has

My wife has been amusing me, this morning

with an account of society's opinions on various observed the Frince. subjects. One-half of her friends assure her that black is white, and the other half tell her it is a vivid yellow. That is called conversa-They give it you with tea, milk, and sugar, between five and seven in the afternoon. Gouache seemed to be in a somewhat communicative frame of mind. As a matter of fact he

often was with Ghisleri, whom he trusted more

"What was it all about?" inquired the latter "People, people, and then people again. What does everybody talk about? Silly stories about Lady Herbert Arden and Saveili, and about Lord Herbert himself, and his dissipated life. The Ardens do not seem to be liked. He is a great friend of yours, is he not?"

"Yes, we have known each other almost ten Ghisleri began to smoke, rather gloomily, for he perceived that there was trouble in store

"It is Donna Adele who does all the mischief," continued Gouache, putting a dash of bright blue into the face of the portrait he was painting, a proceeding which, as Ghisleri noticed with some surprise, improved the likeness. "It is Donna You know the old story. Savelli loved Miss Carlyon but could not marry her. Donna Adele never forgave her, and she will end by doing her a great deal of harm. She pretends that Savelli has told her that Lady Herbert is already talking to him and to everybody of her own wretched married life-rather hinting that if Savelli would care to depart this life of revirtuous and approved fashion, rolling his fine paternal language as in the fourth act of a tragedy at the Comedie Francaise. I suppose you cannot stop this sort of thing, can you?"

'I will try," said Ghisleri, in a tone that made Gouache look round from his painting. He had not often watersed even such a slight manifestation of anger on Pietro's part as was apparent in the enunciation of the three words. You might, perhaps, better than any one

else," observed Gouache. "From other things vinced that the case against her was not by any

like to see you at her feet.

Ghisleri looked at Anastase rather sharply, Donna Adele wished him to pay her more attention that struck him; he was wondering what the other remarks might have been to which Gousche alluded. They might have been directed against the Contessa-or they might have been such as to show that Adele suspected Ghisleri of an attachment for Laura Arden, since he now went so often to the house. As Gounche did not volunteer any further information, however, Ghisleri thought it wiser to ask no questions, and he was inclined to infer that the aforesaid observations had been directed against Maddelena

Ghisleri went away in a very bad humor. So long as the goesip came from the men he had a very simple and definite course open to him, and he knew that his personal influence was con siderable. But when the worst things said were said by women there seemed to be no remedy possible. It would not be an easy matter to go to Adele and tax her with lying, slandering, and evil speaking. She would very properly be anary, and would of course dony that she had ever spoken on the matter; her friends would support her in her denial, and he would be no further advanced than before. He could not possibly go to Francesco Savelli and demand of the latter an explanation of Donna Adele's conduct. That was out of the question. To let Donna Adele know that both Laura and Arden were quite unconscious of her attacks and, in their present life of almost enforced retirement, likely to remain in ignorance of them, might sway Donna Adele, but could do no last. Dry-eyed and pale, she sat beside the Prinspeak to the Princess of Gerano and ask her to usher influence with her stepdaughter, but Chisleri | could to soothe and calm her, while almost chokthought he had struck a possibility at list-he ling herself to keep down the rage she felt. Her could go to old Gerano himself and explain mat- eyes had been opened at last, and she saw what the ters. After all, Gerano was Adele's father and story really was at which Arden had made such a had some authority over her still. Goisleri came | poor guess. As the Princess grew more calm, she rather hastily to the conclusion that this would began to look at her daughter in surprise. be the wisest course to follow, and acted almost immediately upon his decision, for it chanced that | iously, \* Are you iil, dear, you look so changed! he found the Prince at the club, and had the onportunity be needed within half an hour after | enough forming his plan of action

cally, while Gerano blandly listened and puffed at | ened. a cigarette. Donna Adele, he said, had of course no intention of injuring her stepsister, but sho was too young to know the weight a careless tale often carried with it in the world, and had no idea of the harm she was doing. No one, not even the Prince himself, was ignorant of the fact that effort. Don Francesco Savelli's first inclination had been we have been brought up like real sisters, and rather for Miss Carlyon than for Donna Adele, but that it had been a mere young man's faney, with- other, we talk about everything as if we were. out any importance, and that having yielded to I will be careful in future. This may not be all parental authority, Don Francesco was now a persaw the change that had say pleased, though he feetly happy man. Perhaps Donna Adele had not bered exactly what Signer Ghisleri said -or rather, had not thought of producing any impression been able to forget this apparent slight upon her if the Prince has." upon her by what he had done solely for Arden's beauty and charm, as far as her stepsister was concerned, though well aware that her husband thought no more about Ludy Herbert. It was really been his daughter, but the shock had been natural and womanly in her to resent it. But that was not a good reason why she should say— ; by that name whose daughter was Adele Savelli. that Laura's mood would last, because he had as she seemed to be saying constantly-that Lady

Here Ghisleri paused, and the Prince opened his eyes very wide at first, and then almost shut them the man well, however, and guessed that the matter must be serious indeed since he took the

trouble to treat it in such carnest. "I suppose," said Gerane, "that you are quite prepared to support your words if any question

arises. This is a strange tale." "Yes," answered Ghisleri, "I am always ready." He spoke with such gravity that the Prince was

less out of pure carelessness, had certainly, by a foolish jest, suggested the story that Lord Herbert was very intemperate, a story which Glusleri had last year been obliged to deny in the most formal manner in the very room in which they were now talking to a number of men. The tale had of late been revived in a form even more virulent than before, and such untruths, even when they Are we to have another Shrove Tuesday feast this have originated in a hermiess bit of fun, could damage a man's reputation for life.

Prince, who was becoming rather anxious.
"As for instance," continued Ghisleri, "it is now said that Lady Herbert Arden, your step-laughter. now talks to Don Francesco and to everybody-which probably means the few persons who circu late the myth-about her wretched married life It would be so easy! That is the way the modern and other suggestions which I will not repeat are added which are very insulting to her. little man in the Via da' Faleananio who turns part my business is to defend Arden, who is my friend, and who is unfortunately foo ill to defend himself should all this come to his ears. I do not say that this last addition concerning Lady Her ert's confidence comes from Donna Adele Savelli But it is undoubtedly current, and proceeds direct ly from the former gossip, as its natural conse

"Evidently," said the Prince, who kept his tem per admirably, in consideration of the gravity of the case. "And now what do you expect me

"You are Donna Adele's father," answered Ghisleri. "She is assuredly ignorant of the harm she has caused. It would seem quite natural if you suggested to her that it is in her power to undo what she has unintentionally done.

"How, may I ask? By an apology?" Gerano did not like the idea, but Ghisleri smiled.

"That would make matters worse," he said She could put everything right merely by saying a few pleasant things about the Ardens to half a dezen people of her acquaintance-at random. "Friendship is a matter of fortune," said Donna Maria Boccapaduli, the Marchesa di San Giacinto, the Contessa dell' Armi-even Donna Faustina Gouache. She might ask the Ardens to

"I observe that you do not name any men, "It is not the men who have been talking, so far

as I know-nor if they did, would then gossip do so much damage."

"That may be. As for the rest I will say this. Von have said some exceedingly unpleasant things to me this afternoon, but I know you well enough to be sure that you are not only in earnest, but wish to avert trouble rather than cause it. Otherwise I should not have listened to you as I have. am very deeply attached to my only child, though I am also very fond of my stepdaughter. However, I will take this question in hand and find out the truth and do what I can to mend

matters. If I find you have been misinformed, I will ask the favor of another interview." "I shall always be at your service."

They parted rather stiffly, but without any nearer approach to hostility than was implied it the last formal words they exchanged. calked slowly homeward, revolving the situation in his mind, and wondering how he should get it order to get at the truth in the case. Being very fond of his wife, his first impulse was to tell he the whole story, and to take counsel with her be fore doing anything definite. It would have been better had he gone directly to Donna Adele, though he might not have accomplished anything at all, and might have believed her, and might also have quarrelled with Ghisleri afterward. But he did not foresee the consequences.

The Princess was very much overcome by the secount he gave her of his interview with Ghisleri. of whom she had a high opinion as a man of trut spectability she would go with him, a proposition ful character, bad as he seemed to be in other which, of course, Savelli scorns in the most respects. She knew instinctively and at once that respects. She knew instinctively and at once that every one of his statements must have been perfeetly well founded, and that if he had erred it had assuredly not been in the direction of exact gerating the facts. She was in much the same position as her husband, except that her own laughter was the victim, while his was the aggresser. It was strange that in so many years neither should have understood Adele's a rueter well enough to suspect that she could be capable of any treachery, and yet both were now con-

she has said it is quite apparent that she would means a fiction. The Princess was now in the gravest distress, and she could not keep back het tears as she tried to find arguments in Adele's but said nothing. It was not the fact that favor, wishing to the last to defend her husband's child, while never for a moment losing sight of

her own. She was an eminently good woman, but very far from worldly-wise. Indeed, as events procceded that day, there seemed to be a diminution of wisdom in the action of each in turn as compared with that of the last person concerned. Ghisleri had not really allowed himself time to consider the situation in all its bearings before speaking to Gerano or he might not have spoken at

all. Gerano, next, had scarcely hesitated in confiding the whole affair to his wife, and she, in despair, turned to the one person of all others with whom she was really most in sympathy, to Laura Arden herself, regardless of the consequences to everyone concerned. Lord Herbert was resting before dinner, and she found her daughter alone

Her heart was almost bursting, and she poured out the story in all its details, accurately, as she had heard it, though hardly knowing what she said. At first Laura was tempted to laugh. She had been so much happier of late that laughing had grown easy, but she very soon saw the real meaning of the situation, and she grew pule as she silently listened to the end. Then her mother

" And I have loved her so!" cried the poor lady. Almost as I have loved you, my child! Thank of it all-oh, it is not to be believed!"

Laura was not at that moment inclined to she tears. It was almost the first time in her life when she was really anary, for her temper was not easily reused. It was not destined to be the would be positively unkind to coss, holding her hands, then drying her fast flow ing tears, then caressing her, and saying all sh

"What is the matter, darling?" she asked any "I am angry, mother," answered Laura, quietly "I shall get over it soon, I dare say."

Even her voice did not sound like her own. He approached the subject coolly and diplomatic was hollow and strange. Her mother was fright-

> "I have done very wrong to tell you, Laura," she said, realizing too late that the revelation must have been startling in the extreme.

"I do not know," answered Lady Herbert, still speaking in the same peculiar tone, and with an "Adele and I meet constantly. Of course though we were never intensely fond of one antrue, but there is truth in it, if you have remem-

The Princess started slightly. Laura had always called Gerano father, as though she had very sudden, and she found it hard to call the man

"I hope it will turn out to be all a mistake! exclaimed the Princess, weakly, and on the point of bursting into tears unain "Until we are sure of it, I shall try and behave

as usual to Adele, if we have to meet," said Laura After that, if it is all true-I do not know-When the Princess went home she was a little frightened at what she had done, and repented bitterly of having yielded to her own unreasoning lenging to talk the matter over with Lauranatural enough indeed, when it is remembered that the two loved one another so dearly. It had been a mistake, she was sure, and she would have given anything to undo it. She only hoped that she should not be obliged to explain to her hus-

Laura sat alone by the fireside. Herbert was lying down and would not appear until dinner time, so that she had almost an hour in which to think over the situation. She determined to master her anger and to look the matter in the faccalmly. After all, it was only cossip, town talk insignificant chatter, which must all be forgotten in the light of the true facts. So she tried to persuade herself, at least, but she found it a very a believe her own statement of it alabout hers if better, if it had come alone but she could neither forgive nor find an excuse for what had been said against her husband. To know that people openly called him intemperate a drunkarl, that would be the word! Him, of all hving men The assertion was so monstrous that all Laura's resolution to control herself cave way suddenly, and she, in her turn, burst into a flood of tears,

hot, angry, almost agonizing, impossible to check She might have been proud to shed them, for they showed how much more she loved her hus-band than she cared for herself, but she was concious only of the intense desire to face Adele, and do her some grievous bodily hurt and be revenged for the foul slander east on Herbert Arden. She spensel and shut her hands convulsively, as though she were clutching some one and strangling the breath out of a living throat. Every drop of blood n her young body was fire, every tear that rolled lown her pale cheek was molten lead, every beat of her angry pulse brought an angry thought to her brain. How long she remained in this state

She did not hear her husband's labored, halting tep on the soft carpet, and before she was aware of his presence he was standing before her, with a look of pain and almost of horror in his delicate race. That was the most terrible moment in his

distraction as he did, he had always found it har l o understand her love for him. To suspect that all of it was pity, or that a part of it had grown weak of late, was almost impossible to him, and yet the possibility of doubt was there. He had entered the room as usual, without any precaution, but she had not heard him; he had seen her apparently struggling with herself and with some unseen enemy, in a paroxysm of grief and rage Instantly the doubt rose supreme and struck him like a sudden blow in the face.

"She has found out her mistake too late-she does not love me, and she longs to be free." That is what Herbert Arden said to himself as he stood before her, and the horror of it was almost greater than he could bear. Yet there was a great and manly courage in his narrow breast. He felt that he must die, but she should not suffer any more than was necessary until then. He drew the best breath he could, as though it were his last. She started, wild-eyed, as he spoke.

"Laura darling-it has been a terrible mistakeand it is all my fault. Will you forgive me, dear one? I thought that you would love me-I see how it is when you are alone. No woman coulhave borne this bondage of yours as you have borne it since you have found out -- "

"Herbert! Herbert!" cried Laura, in sudden egony. She thought he was going mad before her

and making a gesture with his band as though to keep her in her place. "It is better to say it now, and it need never be said again. Perhaps I should not have the strength. I see it all. are so kind and good that you will never show it to me-but when you are alone-then you let your self go-is it any wonder? Are you to blame You see that you have made the great mistakethat it was all pity and not love-and you lonto be free from me as you should be, as you shall

A wild cry broke from Laura's very heart when she realized what he meant.

"Love: Darling-Herbert! I never loved you

She did not know that she spoke articulate words as she sprang to her feet and clasped him in her areas, half mad with grief at the thought of what he must have suffered, and loving him i

as she said she did, far beyond the love of earlier days. But he hardly understood yet that it was really love, and he tried to look up into her face, almost fainting with the terrible strain he had orne so bravely, and still struggling to be calm

"Laura darling," he said in a low voice, "it was all too natural. Unless you tell me what it was that made you act as I saw you just now, how can I understand?" She turned her deep eyes straight to his.

"Do you doubt me still, Herbert?" she asked. And she saw that he could not help doubting. " but if I tell you that what I was thinking of would pain you very much-and that it would be

"It cannot be like the pain I feel now," he an-

She realized that what he said was true. Then she told him the whole story, as she knew it. And o, in a few hours, the conversation Ghisleri had held with Gouache began to bear fruit in a direcion where neither of them had suspected it possible that their words could penetrate. Arden had allowed himself to sink into a chair

at Laura's side, and he listened with half-clos eyes and folded hands while she spoke. Under ordinary circumstances he would probably have betrayed some emotion, and might have interrupted her with a question or two, but the terrible excitement of the last few minutes was to lowed by a reaction, and he felt himself growing colder and calmer every moment, while his heart. which had been beating furiously when he had first spoken to her, seemed now about to stand As she proceeded, however, he was awar of the most conflicting feelings of happiness and anger-the latter of the quiet and dangerous sort. He saw at once that he had been utterly mistaken in doubting Laura's love, and from that direction peace descended upon his heart; but when he heard what the world was saying of her, he felt that, weak as he was, he had the sudden strength to dare and do anything to avenge the insult. He was human enough, too, to resent bitterly the story about himself, though that, after all, was but a secondary affair in comparison with the

When she had finished he rose slowly and sat upon the arm of her easy-chair, drawing her head his shoulder. He kissed her hair tenderly. "My beloved-can you forgive me?" he asked in a very gentle voice. should have doubted you!" "My darling-that I

"I am glad you did, dear-this once," she anwered. "You see how it is. You are all the world to me-the mere thought that any one can hart you by word or deed-oh, it drives me

And she, who was usually so calm and collected, again made that desperate gesture with her hands, as though she had them on a woman's throat and would strangle out the life of her in the grip of her firm fingers.

"As for me, it matters little enough," said Arden, taking her bands and stroking them as though to soothe her anger. "Of course it is an absurd and discusting story, and I suppose some people believe it. But what they say of you is a very different matter."

"I do not think so," broke in Laura, indignantly. "Of course every one knows that we love each other, and that it is all a lie-but when such a tale is started about a man-that he drinks-oh, it is too atterly vile:" "Dear, shall we try and torget it? At least

for this evening. Let us do our best. You have made me so happy in another way-I suffered in that moment very much She looked up into his face as he sat on the arm of the chair, and she saw that he looked

very ill. The scene had been almost too much or him, and she realized that when he spoke of forzetting it was because he could bear no more "Yes, love," she said, "we will put it all away | matter, for this evening and be happy together as we

always are." Each was conscious, no doubt, that the other was making a great effort, but neither of them referred to the matter again that night. They talked of all manner of subjects, rather nervously and resolutely at first, then naturally and easily as ever, when the deep sympathy which existed between them had asserted itself. During two bours at least they nearly forgot what had so

violently moved them both When Arden laid his head upon his pillow hi anger had not subsided, but he know that his love had taken greater strength and depth than but when he rose in the morning he did not feel tired. Something within him which was quite new seemed to sustain him and neurish him. He anger against the woman who slandered her, or both acting at once, and he did not waste much time in speculating upon his mental condition. He had formed a resolution upon which he meant to act without delay.

It was a rainy morning, chilly and raw again

as the weather had been earlier in the year.

"Give me warm clothes, Donald," he said to his

man. "I am going out." "Going out, my lord-in this weather?" Don-

ald's face expressed the greatest anxiety. "Never mind the weather," said Arden. "Give ne warm clothes, and sayd for a closed carriage." Donald obeyed, shaking his head and muttering detached expressions of disapproval. He was a

### CHAPTER VIII.

Arden, for the first time in his life, paid no attention to Laura's remonstrances when she tried to prevent him from going out in the rain, and he would not hear of her accompanying him on any condition. He assured her that with his fur ont, and in a closed carriage with a foot-warmer, ne was as safe as at home in the drawing-room. and he gave her to understand that he had : small surprise in store for her, of which all the ffect would be spoiled if she went with him. Very reluctantly she let him go. Even after he was gone, when she heard the brougham rattling down the Via Gregoriana, she was tempted to open the window and call the driver back. Then he reflected that she was probably toolish in being so anxious, since he now seemed almost as

When he left the house Arden drove to a certain studio, and then and there bought a small picture which Laura had admired very much and had been two or three times to see. To the artist's surprise, he insisted upon carrying it away with him at once, just as it was. Then he told the coachman to drive to the Palazzo Savelli. He ent up his card and asked to see Don Francesco, and at once received an answer, begging him to go upstairs. Francesco was very much surprised by the visit,

and could not conceive what had brought Lord Herbert Arden to him at 11 o'clock in the more ing. He awaited him in a vast and gloomy drawing-room in which there was no fire. The walls were hung with old portraits of the Savelli in armor, the carpet was of a sombre hue, and the furniture consisted of three superb marble table with carved and gut feet, and sixteen chairs of the style of Louis the Fourteenth's reign, all preisely alike, and standing side by side against the walls. Francesco Savelii stood facing the door, his yellow hair, blue eyes and fresh complexion contrasting strongly with the dark background. He was a fine-looking fellow, with a mild face, a quiet manner and a good deal of old-tashioned formality, which latter, however, seemed to wear off every evening in society, coming back as soon as he returned to the dim and shadowy halls of his home.

The connection between him and Arden was in reality so distant that they had never assumed even the outward forms of intimacy, though their wives called each other sister. Savelli disliked Lord Herbert because he was a cripple, and chiefly because he had married Laura Carlyon. Arden on his side, was more r less indifferent to Fran cesco, but treated him always with a shade more warmth than an ordinary acquamtance, as being, in a sense, a member of his wife's family. Savelli came forward as Ardea entered. The

servant allowed the heavy curtain to drop, closed the door and went out, and the two men were left alone. "Good morning, my dear Arden," said Savelli,

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taking his hand. "I hope you are quite well, homeward he looked at the little picture as it

embroidery,

settle such matters between us without the intervention of others."

ettle such matters between as without the intercentian of others."

Savelli opened his eyes in surprise, but said othing, only making a slight inclination of the ead in answer. Arden continued in the coal and officed manner with which he had begun.

"A number of outgroupe his?" he said slowly course. nothing, only making a slight inclination of the be head in answer. Arden continued in the cool and collected manner with which he had began. "A number of outrageous lies," he said slowly,

of them concern myself. May I inquire whether;

more and more astonished. It is said, in the first place, that my wife is very much in love with you-

"With me?" cried Savelli, startled out of his formality for once. "Yes, with you, and that she has loved you

Secondly, it is raid that I am a confirmed drunkard and that my wife leads a most unhappy

drunkard and that my wife leads a most unhappy drunkard and that my wife leads a most unhappy existence with me in consequence. It is further stated that she makes no secret of this supposed fact, but complains loadly to her friends, and especially selects you for her confidence in the matter."

"That is totally untrue," said Don Francesco gravely. "She has never spoken of you to me except in terms of the highest praise."

"I am aware that it is not true, but I am much obliged to you for your very plain statement, it will go on. It is asserted that any wife has given if you would consent, she would be ready to leave if you would consent, she would be ready to leave in and Rome in your company. These things, it mapears, are current gossip, and confidently saixed as positive truths.

"I have not heard any of them, except some vague reports about yourself, to the effect that you once took too much wine at the Gerame's house. But Ghisleri made a scene about it at the loads. But Ghisleri made a scene about it at the clash and I have heard no more of the absurd clab and I have heard no more of the absurd

into her team into her team of them, except some tague reperts about yoursell, to the effect that be on once took too much wine at the Gerano's ourse. But Glusleri made a scene about it at the lab and I have heard no more of the absurd tory.

have told it to you."
"May I ask who your informant is?"
"My wife."

"And hers ""
"A reliable and truthful person, whom I shall not have at present. The affair concerns you are me. I have not come to the most important point, which will explain why I came to you."

"I supposed that you came as to a connection of the tamily to ask advice or assistance."
"No. That is not it. I do not need either, thank you. I come to you because all these stories are distinctly traceable to Donna Adele Sayelli."

thank you. I come to you be a stories are distinctly traceable to Donna Adele Savelli."

Francesco started violently, and almost rose from his seat, his face flushing suddenly.

"Lord Herbert—take care!" he cried in a loud and anary voice, and with a passiocate gesture.

"Be ceilm," said Arden in an unmaturally quiet tone. "If you strike me you will be disgraced for life, because I am a cripple. But I assure you that I am not ig the least atraid of you.

"You are wrong!" eveluined Savelli, still farious, and turning upon him savagely.

"Not at all," returned the Englishman, memoved. "I came here to settle this business, and I have not the smallest intention of going away until I have said all I meant to say. After that, if you are inclined to demand satisfaction of me, as is the custom here, you can do so, I shall consider the matter. I shall probably not exchange shots with you, because I believe that duelling is wrong. But let me say that I do not in the least mean to insult you, nor, as I think, have I been facking in civility to-dow. I have given you a number of facts which I have every reason for believing to be true. You will in all tikelihood have no didiculty in finding out whether they are true or not. If we, jointly, are cervinced that the statements are false I shall be happy to offer you my best epologies; if not, and if you are convinced that Bongs Adele has been winced that the statements are false I shall be bappy to offer you my best endogies; if not, and if you are convinced that Horms Adole has be-slandering my wife, I shall expect you to not upon your conviction, as a man of honor should, and take measures to have these reports instantly and fully denied everywhere by Doner Adole herself. I think I have stated the case plainly, and what I have said ought not to offend you, in my opin-ion."

"It is certainly impossible to be more plain," inswered Savelli, regaining something of his our-card calm. "As to what may or may not give offence opinions may differ in England and in

Italy." They probably do," returned Arden coolly. "They probably do," letarned you."
It is not my intention to offend you."
Francesco Savelli looked at the shrunken figure and the thin hands with an odd sensation of repulsion and respect. He had been very far from pulsion and respect. Adden possessed such na pulsion and respect. He had been ve supposing that Herbert Arden possessionable courage and unperturbable c not being by any means a coward binasel ould not help admiring bravery in others. tions concerning the sacredness of the familhonor, which he now felt was really at stake, an he had all a Roman's dread of a public scandal.

"I must beg you once more to tell me by whee these stories were told to Lady Herbert," he said

answered Arden. "I do not wish to drag other people juto the affair. You will be able to find out for yourself, and probably through members of your own family, how much truth there is in

You positively refuse to tell me?"

"I have said so. If you wish to be confronted with the person in question I will consult that person, as I said before."
"And if I then, on my side, positively refuse to And if I then, on my side, positively refuse to do anything without having previously spoken to that person—to him or to her—what then?"

"In my opinion you will be allowing a state of things to continue which will not ultimately reflect credit upon you or yours. Moreover, you will oblige me to take some still more active measures."

"What measures?"

"How make the control of the cont

taking his hand. "I hope you are quite well. Pray be seated."

"Good morning. Thanks." Both spoke in French.

They sat down, side by side, on the stiff, high-backed gilt chairs, and each looked at the other.

"I have something especial to say to you," began Arden in his calm and even voice—a man quicker witted than Savelli would have notized the look of determination about the smooth-shaven lips and the prominent chin—the look of a man who will not be trifled with, and will say what he means in spite of all difficulties an i all opposition.

"I am entirely at your service," answered Don Francesco politely.

"Thanks. I have thought it best to come to you directly, because my business concerns your wife and mice, and it is better that we should settle such matters between us without the inter-"It is an invitation to dinner from Adele,"

Better to accept it, is it not?" asked Laura.

"A number of outrageous lies," he said slowly, "are in circulation concerning my wife, and some of them concern myself. May I inquire whether you have heard them?"

"It would facilitate matters if you would tell me something of their nature," observed Savelli, more and more astonished.

"There is no difficulty about that. I can even repeat them to you, word for word, or nearly so repeat them to you, word for word, or nearly so repeat them to you, word for word, or nearly so repeat them to you, word for word, or nearly so repeat them to you, word for word, or nearly so the first place, that my wife is very labeled the previous evening Germa and taken on the previous evening Germa and the previous and the previous are the early of the previous evening Germa and the previous and the previous and the previous and the previous are the early of the previous and the previous and the previous are the previous and the previous and the previous are the previous and the previous and the previous are the previous and the previous and the previous are the previous and the previous are the previous and the previous and the previous are the previous and the previous areas the previous areas the previous and the previous areas the previous and the previous areas the previous areas the previous areas the previous and the previous areas the previ

idea had originated with Pietro Ghisleri.
On the previous evening Germa and taken pains to see his daughter alone at her own house on pretence of talking to her about business. With considerable skill he had led the conversation no to the required point, and had laid a trap for her.

Do you see much of the Ardens just now?

he asked.

No. We do not next often, answered Adele, with a little maximent of the shoullers.

did not know that Ghisleri had actively she said, with the evident intention of not decay part, answered Arden. "But the story large the tale."

aying the fale.

"But, my dear," protested her father, "yes must see how anxious we are on Laura's account, Really, my child, have a little confidence in motel me what you know."

"It you insist—well, I suppose I must, I am afraid there is no doubt about it. Laura's hashand is very intemperate."

is very intemperate."

b, me: I feared so from what I had heard. said the Prince, looking down and shaking his head very saily. "You see, the people first began to talk about t last year when he was in such a discreteful andition in your house, and Pietro Ghisleri had to take him home."
"Yes, yes'" Gerano still shook his head sor-

to take him home."

"Ves. yes." Gerano still shook his head sorrowfully. "I ought to have known, but they
told me it was a fainting fit. And the worst of
it is, my dear Adele, that there are other stories
and worse ones, too, about Laura. I hear that she
is seriously in love with Francesco. Four thing!
it is no wonder—she is so anhappy at home, and
Francesco is such a fine fellow, and always so
kied to her everywhere."

"No, it is no wonder," assented Adele, who
felt that she was launched, and must go to the
end, though she had no time to consider the consequences.

ences.

suppose there is really some evidence about Arden's habits," resumed the Prince. "Of course to will deny it all, and I would like to have omething to fall back upon—to convince myself nore thoroughly, you understand."

more thoroughly, you understand."

Adele paused a moment
"Arden has a Secteh servant," she said presently. "It appears that he is very intimate with any butler, who has often seen him going into the Tempietto with bottles of brandy hidden in an ercoat he carries on his arm."
"Dear me! How shocking!" exclaimed the ince. "So old Guiseppe has actually seen

that!"
"Often," replied Adele, with conviction, "But then, after all—so many men drink. If it were not for Laura—poor Laura!"
"Poor Laura—yes, as I said, it is no wonder if she has fallen in love with Francesco—such a handsome fellow, too! She has shown good i ste, at least." The Prince laughed gently, "At all events, you are not jealous, Adele; I can see that,"

exclaimed A lele, with indignant scorn.

"I," exclaimed Adele, with indignant scorn.
"No, indeed!"
Gerano began to feel his pockets, as though searching for something he could not find. Then he rang the bell at his elbow.

"I have forgotten my cigarettes, my dear, I must have left them in my coat," he said.

The old butter answered his summons in person, for Gerano knew the usage of the house and had cressed the button three times, unnoticed by Adele, which meant that Guiseppe was wanted.

"I have left my cigarettes in my coat, Guiseppe," said the Prince. Then as the man turned to go, he called him back. "Guiseppe!"
"Excellency!"

to go, he called him back. "Guiseppe!"

"Excellency!"

"I want you to do a little commission for me, I have a little surprise for Donna Lauga, and I do not want her to know where it comes from. It must be placed on her table, do you see? Now bonna Adele tells me that you are very intimate with Lord Herbert's Scotch servant—"

"I. Excellency?" Guiseppe was very much astonished.

"Yes-the man with sandy gray hair, and big nose, and a red face—a most excellent ser-vant, who has been with Lord Herbert since he was a child. Donna Adele says you know him

very well--"
"Her Excellency must be mistaken. It must be mistaken.

"Her Facelleney must be mistaken. It must have been some other servant who told her. I never saw the man."

"You said Gurseppe, did you not?" asked the Prince very blandly, and turning to Adele. She bit her lip in silence. "Never mind," he continued. "It is a misunderstanding, and I will manage the surprise in quite another way. My sigarettes, Guiseppe."

The man went out, and Adele and the Prince sat without exchanging a word, until he returned with the case, Gerano all the time looking very gentle. When the servant was gone a second time, the Prince's expression changed suddenly, and he spoke in a stern voice.

"Now that you have sufficiently disgraced yourself, my daughter, you will begin to make reparation at once," he said.

Adele started as though she had been struck, and stared at him.

"I am in earnest," he added.

"What do you mean, papa?" she asked, frightened by his manner. "Disgraced myself? You must be mad:"

"You know perfectly well what I mean," answered her father. "I have been playing a little comedy with you, and I

"You know perfectly well what I mean," answered her father. "I have been playing a little comedy with you, and I have found out the truth. You know as well as